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carrying their delicate prematurely-born young about with them wherever they go. They have this condition, viz., a soft, warm, well-lined portable nursery-pocket or "perambulator." Take the case of one of our wild quadrupeds, suppose a fox or wild cat; they make their nest, they have their litter. Suppose it should happen that they must travel one or two hundred miles to get a drink of water, impelled by the peculiar thirsty condition of a nursing-mother, but obliged to leave the little family at home,—where would that family be when the parent returned from its hundred miles journey, the poor, little, blind, deserted litter? Why, starved to death. In order that quadrupeds should be fitted to exist in a great continent like Australia, where the meteoric conditions are such as to produce the dilemma I have instanced, those quadrupeds must possess an organisation suited to such peculiar climatal conditions. And so it is; that form of mammalian quadruped in this great continent, native to it, and born so as to make these migrations to obtain that necessity of life, has the superadded pouch and genetic peculiarities enabling them to carry their young ones wherever they go. And since we find that marsupial animals have lived in Australia from a very remote period, so we may infer that its peculiar climate has prevailed during as vast a lapse of time. Permit me to conclude by repeating that the peculiar mammalian forms of Australia hide themselves by day, and must be sought for by night, or early dawn, or twilight. The scientific traveller, bearing in mind that the marsupialia are nocturnal and keep out of view, would do well to let no night pass without setting and baiting traps for them. He would probably thus be able greatly to enrich our catalogues of these most curious and interesting quadrupeds.

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The Second Paper read was:—

2. *Notes on the Manacusi, or River King George.* By CHARLES H. HILLIARD, Mate of the Cutter *Herald*. 1857.

Communicated by J. LYONS M'LEOD, Esq., F.R.G.S., late H. M. Consul at Mozambique.

THE *Herald* sailed on a trading expedition up the Manacusi River. When she had attained a distance of from 100 to 140 miles from its mouth, the Portuguese authorities forbade farther progress, and the vessel was ordered to return. Mr. Hilliard gives an account of what was observed during the three weeks the *Herald* was in the river. The bar at its mouth is described as the scene of a fearful surf, dangerous to a boat, but offering no difficulty to the vessel:—

"Opposite to the passage by which we entered are several large, low islands, densely covered with the finest red mangrove poles I ever saw, on which the archil grows in great abundance, and on the bush by the banks of the river. For some miles up the river the banks are more or less covered with bush, mangrove jungles, and trees, generally a species of banian, and others, indicating a wet soil, the most of which I have seen growing in swamps in Natal. On the first night, by where we anchored, the large bush-buck (*Inconcha*) appeared to be plentiful from the number we heard barking like small dogs.

"On the west side of the river a ridge of high land, apparently continuous, but very irregular in its direction and elevation, extended the whole length of our journey; at a few points it approached the river, but generally a flat, marshy tract of country, many miles in width, and densely covered with a coarse kind of Guinea-grass five or six feet high, lay between it and the river; on the opposite side flats of the same description reached from the river to the sea, and from the highest point we reached they were only bounded to the northward by the horizon. The lower part of the river, as far as we felt the influence of the tide, was of good width, and much more straight than it was farther up, the banks in its whole length generally fringed with a thick border of tall reeds a few yards in width. The banks here were frequently studded with trees or small patches of wood, the trees of the same kinds as those near the mouth of the river; and two of our party having landed in one of them, in pursuit of some guinea-fowls, were soon glad to retreat, as they found no ground to walk on, but were half way up their legs in soft clayey mud. Near the head of the tide-water the river became narrower, but continued the same uniform depth the whole distance we traversed, having from 6 feet to 9 feet by the banks, and from two to three fathoms in the channel; only one shallow spot was found in the whole distance (from 100 to 140 miles), where the water suddenly shoaled to 6 feet, and we frequently shaved the banks so close that our little craft brushed the reeds down with her mainsail, with plenty of water under foot. For many miles of the upper part of our journey it was wholly without wood, except here and there a straggling fig-tree, generally on the edge of the bank, and bent over the river by the force of the southeasterly winds (several times much to our annoyance), and all of them destitute of branches on the weather side, and appearing as if swept down by a hurricane, from the effects of which they had never recovered.

"We landed several times with the idea of searching for game, but, wherever the grass had not been burnt we found it impossible to penetrate it even for a few yards, and in most parts of it a buffalo might have been started within 3 yards of a person without his being able to see the animal. The course of the river is one of the most serpentine that can well be imagined, and I believe that in passing its interminable bends we headed to almost every point of the compass; but the same uniform depth and monotonous appearance throughout, and our view generally bounded on all sides by a wall of tall reeds and grass, from which myriads of musquitoes issued and tormented us all night."

The banks of the river were found in some places to be honey-combed with pitfalls for hippopotami and other animals. There were large numbers and many varieties of birds, but only one kind of fish, and that was a species of barbel, which occasionally attained a great size. The natives caught them and sold them in bundles, split, skewered open, and dried in the smoke.

In adjourning the meeting, the President said that he must remark that the communications made to this meeting, and the observations which had been made on them, had given him as much satisfaction as he had ever experienced on any former occasion since he had occupied the chair. He then reminded the assembly that he had directed cards to be sent to every Fellow of the Society, inviting them to soirées on the 16th and 30th of March; and that if any Fellow had, through accident, not received the card, he hoped that the omission would be overlooked.

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*Ninth Meeting, March 28th, 1859.*

SIR RODERICK I. MURCHISON, PRESIDENT, in the Chair.

PRESENTATIONS.—*Captain L. S. Tindal, R.N.; Captain H. Harris; Captain John Walker; H. D. Jencken; David Kay; and Thomas Phinn, Q.C., Esqrs.; were presented upon their election.*

ELECTIONS.—*Colonel Henry F. Ainslie; Lieut.-Colonel A. Lane Fox; the Rev. G. Croke Rowden; L. P. Delves Broughton; John H. Gurney, M.P.; C. H. Rogers Harrison; and C. Orby Wombwell, Esqrs.; were elected Fellows.*

EXHIBITIONS.—Several Chinese Maps and Drawings of the Yang-tse-Keang, and a magnetic variation Chart of the World, by F. J. Evans, Esq., R.N., F.R.G.S., were exhibited.

The Papers read were:—

1. *Notes of a Voyage up the Yang-tse-Keang, from Wosung to Han-Kow.*  
By LAURENCE OLIPHANT, Esq., F.R.G.S., Secretary to the Earl of Elgin. *With a Chart of the River;* by CAPT. SHERARD OSBORN, R.N., C.B., F.R.G.S., in command of Her Majesty's Ship *Furious*.

THE squadron consisted of the *Retribution*, *Cruiser*, and *Furious*, with the gunboats *Dove* and *Lee*, and started from near Shanghai on Nov. 9th, 1858. The *Retribution* was found to draw too much water, and was ultimately left 90 miles above Nankin; the remaining vessels attained to the far-famed Chinese mart Han-Kow, which is upwards